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Synonymy and Contextual

Disambiguation of Words

Eric Foxley and Godwin M. Gwei

Perform your original search, completing expression attribute prefixes co-occurrence parsing dictionaries omission document prefix, in *Int J Lexicography* Search

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Computer Science Department, Nottingham University Nottingham, UK

Synonymy occurs when several different words can represent

similar meanings. Ambiguity occurs when a single word in a

given context may have several different meanings. This paper

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describes computer developments which provide tools to assist in both of these situations, and from which computer tools can be developed to assist the authoring of text, and the writing of interactive computer systems.

In text authoring, we may wish to vary our vocabulary by the use of synonyms to arouse the interest of the reader, or to add emphasis to a topic; and we will generally wish to avoid ambiguity by the choice of nonploysemous words, or by the addition of enough context clues to resolve the ambiguity.

In interactions with computers, the aspects of input and output are distinct. Where the user gives input to the computer, it should be able to recognise the user's vocabulary, and accept freely generated citations representing the information required. Any ambiguous construction entered by the user should be queried. When giving output to the user, the computer may either use synonyms to make the conversation more varied, or may use only one from any group of synonyms to encourage the user into a more restricted vocabulary; and computer output should be chosen to be non–ambiguous.

The paper describes the development of a suite of computer programs to determine and reduce

Synonymy and Contextual Disambiguation of Words -- Foxley and Gwei 2 (2): 111 -- Int... Page 2 of 2

ambiguity in text, and to enable the computer to correctly relate a variety of synonyms to a single concept.

Key Words: Ambiguity • Concept • Natural language • Polysemy • Roget • Synonymy • Thesaurus

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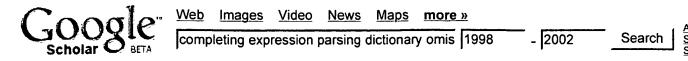
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